



Wildlands Update for January

General Recreation Notes

Happy Birthday Alaska! On January 3, 1959, President Eisenhower signed the proclamation admitting Alaska to the union as the 49th state.

Current Snow Condition and Avalanche Information (as of 12/29/06): Chugach National Forest is mostly open for snow machines. Turnagain has 74" of snow pack with high avalanche danger. The Twenty-mile area is closed. Chugach State Park has opened Eklutna, North Fork at Eagle River, and Bird Valley. Hatcher Pass needs another foot of snow to open. Nancy Lake and Willow Creek State Recreation Areas are open to snow machines. Denali State Park needs another 6" of snow. For current conditions, visit the web sites below:

Nancy Lake and Denali State Parks:
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/asp/nancydenali.htm>

Hatcher Pass:
<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/asp/hatcherpass.htm>

Turnagain Pass/Girdwood Valley:
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/glacier/advisory.html>

Avalanche information: www.avalanche.org

Firewood: For rules on gathering firewood, check with the Chugach National Forest at http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/news_releases/firewood.html or call (907) 269-8463 for locations on state land.

Please do not harass winter wildlife! Please view and photograph animals from a distance. Many animals (such

as sea otters and moose) are busily storing up fat reserves. Remember, the energy and fat these animals are forced to burn by being stressed could determine whether they survive the winter.

Road Closures:

The Denali Highway from Cantwell to Paxson is closed; the Taylor Highway is closed from the Alaska Highway Junction to Eagle at MP160. The Top of the World Highway is closed at U.S. Customs. For updated road conditions throughout the state including internet camera views, visit <http://511.alaska.gov/> or dial 511 in Alaska, (866) 282-7577 outside Alaska.

Wildlife Wednesdays, a monthly program at the Anchorage Loussac Library's Marston Theater, will be featuring "Polar Bears - On the Cusp of Change" at 7:00pm on January 17.

Alaska State Parks

2007 Alaska State Decals for day use are available for purchase for \$40 at various sport stores, government offices, AND on-line. Eight ice fishing huts are available for rent. Four are at Birch Lake near mile 305.5 Richardson Highway and four are located at Quartz Lake near mile 277.8 Richardson Highway. They have a wood burning stove and four fishing holes. They rent for \$15 per day and can be reserved on-line at www.alaskastateparks.org

Chugach State Park

Campgrounds remain closed for the winter. A 24-hour recorded message with status for snowmachine areas

can be heard at (907) 269-8400 and pressing extension "1". Eklutna, North Fork at Eagle River and Bird Valley are open to snow machines as of 12/28/06 at noon. For current conditions, call (907) 345-5014 or visit

<http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/asp/curevnts.htm>.

Nancy Lake State Recreation Area

The gate at mile 2.2 of the Nancy Lake Parkway is closed to highway vehicles. The Winter Trailhead parking lot, Public Use Cabin lot, and the first 2.2 miles of Nancy Lake Parkway have been plowed. Ski conditions are good with lots of new powder snow.

Hatcher Pass

The Nordic ski trails within the Independence Mine Bowl are in excellent condition. No other trails in the Hatcher Pass Area have been groomed (as of 12/29). Good sledding can be found near the Independence Bowl Parking lot; good skiing and snowboarding can be found at higher elevations. Do be careful of rock outcrops. Skiing is good out on the Archangel Trail and the Gold Mint Trail.

Some good websites

Alaska outdoor information:
<http://www.nps.gov/aplic>
Alaska weather information:
<http://www.arh.noaa.gov/>
Alaska Volcano Observatory :
<http://www.avo.alaska.edu/>
Sunrise-Sunset:
<http://aa.usno.navy.mil/data/>
Road Conditions:
<http://www.dot.state.ak.us/>

Denali State Park

Construction crews are still working on the new park cabin at Byers Lake. For information, contact the Mat/Su Area Office at (907) 745-3975.

For more information about AK State Parks, call (907) 269-8400. Call (907) 745-3975 for Mat-Su State Park info or (907) 495-6273 for Nancy Lake Ranger Station. State Parks current events can be found at <http://www.dnr.state.ak.us/parks/asp/curevnts.htm>

National Park Service

Kenai Fjords National Park

Summer use cabins in the park are now available for rent. Rental period is May 25 through September 9. Aialik Bay cabin is closed for maintenance from July 6-22 and Holgate Arm cabin is closed for maintenance June 1-14. Reservations can be made by calling (907) 271-2737 or in person at the Alaska Public Lands Information Center in Anchorage beginning January 2.

The Willow Public Use Cabin, 7 miles from Box Canyon Gate, is available for rent this winter. Reservations are required and can be made in person at Park Headquarters in Seward or by calling 224-7500. Cost is \$35 per night; stays are limited to three nights. There are concessionaires that are authorized to provide winter tours by traditional dog sled throughout the park. Technical ice climbing is permitted on the glacier's terminus from November through March, although ice climbing opportunities are very limited due to unstable ice conditions. For further park information call (907) 224-7500 or visit the website at <http://www.nps.gov/kefj>.

Denali National Park and Preserve

The National Park Service is soliciting input into the development of a Resource Stewardship Strategy for Denali National Park & Preserve. The strategy will guide research and resource management activities at Denali for the next 15-20 years. For dates and agendas contact Kris Fister at (907) 683-9583 or (907) 271-2737. Bus and campground reservations for the 2007 visitor season can now be made on-line, by mail or by fax.

Visit <http://www.nps.gov/denali/planyourvisit/bus-reservations.htm> for instructions.

Park staff is offering 2-3 hour guided hikes, weather-permitting, on Saturdays and Sundays all winter. Visitors are welcome to stop at the Murie Science and Learning Center from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. daily. Riley Creek campground remains open, but provides no services. For further information call (907) 683-2294 in Denali NP or (907) 733-2231 in Talkeetna or visit <http://www.nps.gov/denali>.

Fish and Wildlife Service

Kenai National Wildlife Refuge

Areas traditionally open to snow machining have received enough snow to protect underlying vegetation (visit the web site for maps denoting these areas). The refuge also offers 13 public use cabins. Winter visitor center hours are 8:00am-4:30pm on weekdays and 10:00am-5:00pm on weekends. For winter activity information, please go to <http://kenai.fws.gov/VisitorsEducators/visiting/winter/winter.htm>

National Forest Service

Chugach National Forest

The Primrose and Lost Lake Trail access to Lost Lake Area and the Placer River Drainage opened to over-the-snow use on Friday, December 22. Most of the designated snowmachine areas in the Chugach National Forest are already open for use. Walk-in camping is allowed at campgrounds in the winter, but no services are provided. Outhouses are available at the Begich-Boggs Visitor Center and Moose Flats year-round. For more info, call the Glacier Ranger District (907) 783-3242 or the Seward Ranger District (907) 224-3374. For internet updates visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach>.

Southcentral Visitor Centers Eagle River Nature Center

Located at mile 12 of Eagle River Road, ERNC is open Fridays & weekends, 10am-5pm. During the winter, ERNC staff conducts field trips emphasizing snow studies, winter survival, and animal tracking. There is a \$5.00 parking fee that is not covered by the

Alaska State Parks day use pass. Call (907) 694-2108 for more information. Check their website at <http://www.ernc.org> or call (907) 694-2108 for more information.

Campbell Creek Science Center

The center is open Monday through Friday 7:30am-4pm.

The Fireside Chat Series at 7:00pm on January 17th focuses on "Renewable Energy in Alaska." The Astronomy Series will be held at 7:00pm on January 11 featuring "The Science in Science Fiction." For a calendar of events and further information, call (907) 267-1247 or check the website at <http://www.blm.gov/ak/events.html>

Begich-Boggs Visitor Center

The visitor center will be closed during the winter due to lack of funding. Call (907) 783-2326 for more information or visit the website at http://www.fs.fed.us/r10/chugach/chugach_pages/bbvc.html

Alaska Islands and Ocean Visitor Center

The Center will be open noon to 5:00pm, Tuesday through Saturday. For more information call (907) 235-6961 or visit <http://www.islandsandoccean.org/>.

Alaska Public Lands Information Centers

The Downtown Anchorage location is open 10:00am-5:00pm weekdays during the winter. Stop by to enjoy the exhibits and movies or purchase a gift from the ANHA store. Call (907) 271-2737 or go to <http://www.nps.gov/aplic> for more information.

Alaska Public Lands Information Center in downtown Fairbanks is open Tuesdays-Saturdays 10:00am-6:00pm. Call (907) 456-0527 for more information or go to <http://www.nps.gov/aplic> to get the latest scheduled program information.

The Tok Center location is open Monday to Friday 8:00am-4:30pm. Call (907) 883-5667 for more information.

Updated 12/29/06